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Remarks

Applicant's agent and assignee's representative thank the Examiner for her courtesy and helpful suggestions during the October 21, 2003 interview at the Examiner's office.

As discussed and as set out in the Interview Summary, the Examiner acknowledged that the claims would define over the cited art rejection if Applicant specified that the interlocking assembly is configured to permit relative lateral movement between adjacent panels. Applicant has so amended claim 1 and accordingly this feature is included in dependent claims 2, through 10 and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Upon further reflection, Applicant notes that the present invention differs from the Stief reference in that the interlocking assembly in Applicant's invention forms part of the upper member whereas those of the Stief reference form part of the lower member. Accordingly in Stief once the upper member is connected to the lower member the interlocking portion is obscured rendering the interlocking assembly unusable for the joinder of panels once the upper member has been applied. In contrast, Applicant's configuration enables joinder of assembled panels rather than *in situ* assembly as required by Stief.

Claims 11 and 12 have been amended to specify that the interlocking members are in the upper member of the panel and to incorporate the amendments made previously to claim 1 with respect to changing "moisture" to --water--.

For all of the reasons set out above, Applicant respectfully submits that the application as amended is in condition for allowance and action toward that goal is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions or concerns with the above amendments or reasons, Applicant asks that the Examiner kindly telephone Applicant's agent at the number set out below in the interest of expeditiously advancing this case toward a favourable resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enc.

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